United Nations A/62/PV.82

General Assembly

Sixty-second session

Official Records

82nd plenary meeting
Wednesday, 13 February 2008, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kerim ..... (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Beck (Palau), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Thematic debate entitled "Addressing climate change: the United Nations and the world at work"

Agenda items 48, 54 and 116 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Sustainable development

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Report of the Secretary-General (A/62/644)

The Acting President: Since we still have 74 speakers on the list and must finish today, I beg speakers to respect the five-minute rule.

I now give the floor to Ms. Rina M. Tareo, representative of the Marshall !slands.

Ms. Tareo (Marshall Islands): The Republic of the Marshall Islands wishes to fully align itself with the statement made by Tonga, on behalf of the small island developing States of the Pacific Islands Forum, and Grenada, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States.

Many of the world's low-lying small island nations — the nations most vulnerable to climate impacts — have spent decades trying to bring the urgency of climate change to the attention of States Members of the United Nations. With its average elevation at only three metres above sea level, the Marshall Islands truly values the personal leadership of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon regarding this issue and the commitment of General Assembly President Kerim to finally giving climate change the attention it so richly deserves within the United Nations system.

However, we must not fool ourselves into thinking that climate change can be addressed only by generalized discussion. Instead, the global community needs the help of a more effective and coherent United Nations system to turn broad hopes for climate change into action-oriented results. Too often, paperwork, studies and well-meaning United Nations agency intentions have failed to translate into real benefits.

The United Nations system must recognize that adaptation is an inherently limited long-term solution for certain low-lying Member States, such as the Marshall Islands. While there are important mid-term adaptation strategies, such as the Micronesia Challenge, which aims to conserve our vulnerable coastal resources by 2020, rising sea levels will likely present questions which are without legal precedent in the global community.

With fragile coastal ecosystems as the basis of our food security and traditional land tenure as the foundation of our cultural identity, my country must ask the global community some difficult questions regarding threats to our development, security and

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

08-23864 (E)

fundamental freedom. What becomes of our national boundaries and cultural traditions, our legal identity and our homeland? In what ways might major emitters bear responsibility under international law?

The global community cannot continue to avoid these questions. In working to support the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations, the United Nations system can also facilitate productive diplomatic discussion on issues of human rights and national sovereignty central to the Charter of the United Nations.

My country suggests that an important role for the United Nations system rests in assisting Member States with domestic implementation of the UNFCCC and other climate change goals. The need for assistance has never been more urgent. Major greenhouse gas emitters are struggling to integrate climate strategies with economic development goals. Domestic climate change initiatives are time-consuming to develop, are rarely linked with urban or industrial growth programmes at the national or local level, and rarely allow for public involvement.

With extreme urgency, the Marshall Islands calls attention to the August 2007 plenary statement of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization which called upon the global community to examine the potential interlinkage between climate goals and existing national or local environmental laws, in particular the environmental impact assessments — a legal norm unilaterally adopted by over 100 Member States. We urge the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), to carefully study the ability of environmental impact assessment laws to address climate change and, as appropriate, work closely with national experts to build this capacity.

Our relationships on climate change with key partners have already allowed my country to take great strides in further reducing our own small amount of greenhouse gas emissions, even though we are not an annex I country. However, decision makers who have the greatest opportunity to make an impact on implementing climate change goals and populations who are at greatest risk are too often excluded from meaningful interaction within the United Nations system.

Innovative cross-sectoral partnerships open up direct lines of communication between populations most affected by climate impacts and the decision makers who are able to reduce those impacts. A useful example is the 2007 Statement of Shared Action between the Marshall Islands and King County, including the City of Seattle in the State of Washington. We encourage the United Nations system to take a more direct role in playing matchmaker and encouraging these direct relationships between key decision makers and highly vulnerable populations.

Oceans and coastal areas are critical for the survival of many small island developing States. We call upon the United Nations system to address the potential for the conservation of coral reefs to be considered as an eligible carbon sink under the Clean Development Mechanism. In addition, we call upon the United Nations system to examine the link between climate change impacts, including coral reef bleaching and ocean acidification, and the food security gained from commercial and subsistence fisheries, and to alert decision makers of its findings.

The Marshall Islands is strongly concerned that the new global climate change funding mechanisms under discussion with the World Bank may compete with existing and newly established funding channels for adaptation. It is important that the recipient nations also be afforded an opportunity to participate in governance of these funds and that the United Nations system ensure that climate change adaptation funding continues to be addressed with transparency.

The narrow window for global action is rapidly closing. My nation urges both the United Nations system and Member States to meet this extraordinary challenge by turning rhetoric into results.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Daniele D. Bodini, Permanent Representative of San Marino.

Mr. Bodini (San Marino): I would like to thank President Kerim for organizing this important event. We strongly believe that climate change is a critical issue on the agenda of the General Assembly, and we greatly appreciate his effort to keep our attention focused on it. I would also like to commend the Secretary-General for, to quote his own words, having "moved climate change up to the top of the agenda" and for his inclusive report entitled "Overview of United Nations activities in relation to climate change"

(A/62/644). We were impressed by the attendance of a great number of world leaders at the High-level Event on Climate Change last September. This broad participation reflects the determination and, more important, the moral commitment of all Member States to resolve in an equitable manner such an enormous challenge.

The Fourth Assessment Report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change provided us with further evidence of climate change and its causes. It presented a practical basis for adaptation and mitigation strategies. The Bali Action Plan represents a promising road map to guarantee a coordinated and comprehensive multilateral action to address this emergency situation. We are looking forward to the December 2009 conclusive meeting to be held in Copenhagen.

Climate change is affecting all countries without distinction — whether small or large, developing or developed — but we can all agree that developing countries are facing a greater emergency and need increased financial support and strengthened capacity-building. We concur with General Assembly President Kerim's statement that we need to reconcile the economic aspirations of developing countries with the necessity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

We also believe that a universal strategy to address climate change is our only solution and that the entire process has to be coordinated under the leadership of the United Nations system.

Development and economic growth can and must move forward together with environmentally friendly policies. The negative consequences of climate change represent a concrete obstacle to reaching the Millennium Development Goals, a threat to international peace and a cause of humanitarian emergencies. We cannot succeed without effective strategies at all levels, balancing environmental need, energy consumption and economic growth.

Technological progress in new and renewable sources of energy is a key element of the entire process and should be one of the main objectives of our efforts. Partnerships between Governments with fiscal and/or direct incentives and the private sector can significantly contribute to focusing on investments in effective alternative technologies and ensure universal access to know-how and expertise.

San Marino is finalizing new legislation promoting energy efficiency with the use of new and renewable sources of energy and introducing water, sanitation and water waste management programmes to reduce water consumption. This regulation will include new criteria and incentives to promote alternative clean technologies.

We are confident that we can significantly modify the energy and environmental patterns of the entire country and reduce San Marino's CO_2 emissions as well as its dependency on energy imports.

Finally, we want to underline the importance of environmental education and respect for natural resources as the basis of our social policies. In fact, as has been pointed out several times, to succeed we have to raise the awareness of private citizens, business communities and Governments.

While there is no guarantee that we will be able to slow down global warming, it is clear that all of us have to remain committed to curb this catastrophic outcome. Reversing this trend would be the greatest legacy for our future generations.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Nirupam Sen, Permanent Representative of India.

Mr. Sen (India): At the outset, permit me to express our appreciation of President Kerim's initiative and leadership on this important issue. We associate ourselves with the statement made yesterday by Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Group of 77.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) remains the only comprehensive framework to deal with climate change issues, a fact reaffirmed during the recent Bali meeting. Efforts to address climate change, including this thematic debate, must support and feed into the ongoing processes under the UNFCCC rather than create parallel processes. Such efforts should also be based on the provisions and principles of UNFCCC, particularly the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

Other United Nations system entities can assist, as per their mandates, in the effective implementation of the provisions, commitments and action plans of the UNFCCC. Bertolt Brecht once said that it is sometimes a crime to talk about a tree because it implies a silence about injustice. For developing countries, the

imperative therefore is poverty eradication and development. The United Nations is best placed to ensure that addressing climate change does not impede this objective.

The issues of technology and financing are vital for effectively addressing climate change. We would have liked to see a detailed coverage of these issues in the background documents provided for this debate.

Current mechanisms to promote cost-effective and affordable access to advanced clean technologies for developing countries have not been very successful. The United Nations must play a leading role in this area by promoting joint research; country-driven approaches incorporating existing capacities; adoption and diffusion of technology; greater focus on adaptation technologies; and, most important of all, a facilitative, intellectual property rights regime that balances rewards for innovators with the common good of humankind. The issue may be difficult: the United Nations must grasp the nettle and not bypass it in background documents.

Similarly, there is an urgent need to provide new and additional financial resources to developing countries for addressing climate change, without diverting resources meant for development. The role of the United Nations cannot merely be limited to assisting developing countries in formulating policies to enhance climate change-related investment flows. It would be myopic to believe that such national efforts would be sufficient to raise the large resource flows required. Instead, the United Nations must assist in the development of financial mechanisms and funds for effective resource flows into developing countries.

On mitigation, the United Nations, rather than identifying mitigation strategies by developing countries, should focus on how developed countries can sharply reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. In this regard, the United Nations should play an active role in advocacy by urging developed countries to meet their commitments and to take further ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reduction commitments. The United Nations should also identify various ways and means by which developed countries can take action in mitigation. The developed countries must reduce their emissions so that the developing countries can breathe and grow.

In the gospel of Saint Thomas, discovered and authenticated not so long ago, it is stated that blessed are the poor for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. In terms of climate change, one can add that blessed are the poor for they have saved the earth. Perhaps it would now be time for the rich to do something in the same direction.

Climate change must be addressed in the context of sustainable development, rather than attempting to integrate it with trade, social, economic, security, migration or humanitarian issues. We would also caution against using discussions on climate change to influence other ongoing United Nations processes like system-wide coherence or international environmental governance.

While the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination can play a role in coordinating United Nations system efforts, we would like to see much greater Member State oversight.

Greater emphasis on South-South cooperation in areas like adaptation would be useful. India would be happy to share with our friends in the developing world the science and technology expertise and capacities that India has built over the years.

India is very conscious of the challenge of climate change and the serious impact it will have on all of us. Yet, like other developing countries, we have to ensure accelerated and sustained development so that millions of poor people can secure a better life. This will inevitably require increased energy consumption.

Nevertheless, we have stated that even as we pursue development, our per capita greenhouse gas emissions would at no stage exceed the per capita greenhouse gas emissions of developed countries. Our per capita emissions of 1 ton per annum are only a fourth of the world average, and our cumulative historical emissions of 23 tons are a fraction compared to the 1,100 tons emitted by many developed countries.

At the inauguration of this debate on 11 February 2008, Mayor Bloomberg of New York City asked China and India to accept world energy efficiency standards and said that at a future date New York taxis would be run on flexi-fuel. All polluting factories around Delhi have been closed down, and all Delhi buses and taxis have switched to using compressed natural gas. Thus, we have done what New York still has to do.

As for energy efficiency, a recently released World Bank study shows that India's fossil-fuel-related carbon dioxide emission per dollar of GDP is the same as that of Japan and Germany, and newer Indian plants in steel, cement, aluminium and paper have energy efficiencies at the global frontier.

Furthermore, recently India's Ministry of Science and Technology has introduced a technology based on ocean thermal energy conversion that provides clean drinking water from seawater at affordable prices.

India is also entirely sensitive to the concerns of small island developing States that arise out of climate change and will join vigorously in efforts to assist them.

Because of shortage of time and because I touched on this issue during the panel discussions and, above all, because the Chairperson of the Alliance of Small Island States made such an eloquent presentation on the subject yesterday, I do not want to take up more time. However, as he aptly said, "no island should be left behind", and he quoted John Donne, a seventeenth-century poet, who wrote that no man is an island unto himself. In other words, international solidarity is crucial.

Another seventeenth-century poet, a contemporary of his, Andrew Marvell, wrote the lines, "at my back I always hear/Time's wingéd chariot hurrying near". So, on the one hand is the question of international solidarity; on the other, the urgency — and here I think the United Nations is best placed to focus on the needs of the vulnerable, the countries of Africa and the small island developing States and also on the urgent need for a proper enabling environment that is on the intellectual property rights agenda.

Actions by developed countries to sharply reduce their emissions and assist developing countries with financial and technical resources are the key to successfully combating climate change. We look forward to the United Nations and the world working meaningfully towards this goal.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Habib Mansour, Permanent Representative of Tunisia.

Mr. Mansour (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I am pleased to commend the President for his initiative in organizing this thematic debate on climate change, which serves to support the implementation of the Bali Road Map and Action Plan. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his overview report (A/62/644) of the activities of the United Nations in relation to climate change.

Before I address some of the issues to which my country attaches special importance, I would like to associate myself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Antigua and Barbuda, Cameroon and Algeria on behalf of, respectively, the Group of 77 and China, the Group of African States and the Arab Group.

The theme of this debate, namely, "Addressing climate change: the United Nations and the world at work", is a cross-cutting one that encompasses all the threats posed by the problem of climate change as a whole. It also goes to the heart of the issue of development. The challenges are multiple and diverse. They are multilateral, national, present and future, economic, technological, financial, human and even civilizational in nature. Climate change is the clearest manifestation of the rapidly expanding and inequitable phenomenon of globalization. Moreover, the issue of climate change raises many paradoxes. It is telling, in fact, that the regions of the world least responsible for climate change are also the most vulnerable and the most exposed to it, and therefore the least able to adapt to it. For them, adaptation is not just a choice; rather, it is crucial to survival.

However, the difficulty that developing countries, and especially the least developed ones, face in adapting to this environment is an additional handicap, especially as their resources are already insufficient to meet the challenges of economic and social development and reducing poverty. Therefore, combating climate change cannot be to the detriment of development. The challenge posed by climate change requires a technological capacity to respond and a level of economic and human development that many countries, especially the poorest, do not currently have. There is therefore a need to strengthen cooperation of every sort in order to promote sustainable development in the three main areas, namely, economic development, social development and environmental protection.

It is precisely in that regard that the idea of common but differentiated responsibilities, which is the basis of the Framework Convention, comes fully into play. Applying that principle in effect is to respond to the economic, financial and technological

imbalances and inequalities that exist, as well as those regarding the ability to adapt to the negative current and future impacts of climate change.

The outcome of the Bali Conference made it possible for the international community to take a step towards putting in place a framework, timetable and negotiating process. Like many other delegations, my delegation believes that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should continue to be the main platform for the post-Kyoto negotiations. We also believe that the questions of financing and technology transfer should continue to be central issues. In that regard, it is important to diversify and increase sources of financing to address adaptation, so that the efforts made through that instrument can rise to the needs and expectations.

Tunisia, a country whose economy is linked, among other things, to water, agriculture, tourism and its coast — which are all greatly impacted by climate change — has placed the overall protection of the environment, and combating climate change in particular, at the centre of its development policies. Adaptation is the primary national priority in Tunisia. To that end, Tunisia has put in place a whole set of institutional, regulatory and technological measures. It has also adopted environmental plans covering Tunisian industry, financial indicator mechanisms in the area of energy regulation, the promotion of renewable energy, rational ecological waste management, the reduction of greenhouse gases, forest development and improving air quality. Coordination mechanisms at the national level have begun to function, thanks to the support of various agencies and funds or the financing mechanisms established by the Convention and its Protocol. In addition, horizontal efforts have also been made in the areas of training and raising awareness.

Nevertheless, although necessary, the national effort is not enough. International support and various forms of cooperation — bilateral, regional and multilateral — are still required to strengthen the development process and thereby combat and prevent the documented or potential dangers of climate change.

In the spirit of emphasizing the value of cooperation and international solidarity, and with a view to contribute to the worldwide effort to find alternative operational methods of cooperation on the issue of climate change, as well as to strengthen international cooperation in the financial, technological and scientific spheres, from 18 to 20 November 2007, Tunisia hosted an international conference at Tunis on the theme "International solidarity to protect Africa and the Mediterranean region from climate change". The work of the conference culminated in the adoption of a declaration calling for international solidarity to protect Africa and the Mediterranean region from the adverse effects of climate change, as well as a plan of action calling for the establishment of cooperation projects. That is very much in line with the recommendations of the thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which was held in Bali in December 2007. It should also be noted that the Tunis declaration was also adopted by the Tenth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held at Addis Ababa from 31 January to 2 February 2008.

In conclusion, I would say that the challenges posed by climate change are of concern to the entire international community. Combating the adverse effects of climate change will only produce results if they are part of a genuine global alliance based on common but differentiated responsibilities, international financial and technological cooperation and the principle of solidarity.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Collin Beck, Permanent Representative of the Solomon Islands.

Mr. Beck (Solomon Islands): Before making my statement, I would like to make an observation. We speak so passionately of climate change, and yet the Hall is half empty. I think of what the Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States said yesterday: that we have spoken of climate change for 20 years and yet we have not been heard, because we refuse to listen to each other. I just wish to mention that for the record.

I now turn to my statement.

I would like to thank the President once again for convening this gathering on climate change. First of all, my delegation would like to associate and align itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of G77 and China, the representative of Bangladesh, on behalf of the least developed countries (LDCs), and the representative of Grenada, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, as well as by the representative of

Tonga, in my own region, on behalf of the Pacific island States. My delegation wishes to contribute to this debate in its national capacity.

Solomon Islands takes note of the Secretary-General's report (A/62/644) and commends the President and the Secretary-General for keeping climate change warm on the agenda during this cold winter. My delegation assures them of our support as we explore the need to make the United Nations more effective and relevant in dealing with climate change challenges.

The report shows that the magnitude of climate change has outgrown the existing capacity of the United Nations system. In the process, the principle of equity and vulnerability has lost ground within the system. Some countries receive more attention than others. That shows that small is a curse rather than a blessing, as projects submitted are either too small to be considered or too expensive to manage. The fragile environments of small island developing States and LDCs are therefore left to face the full brunt of global warming. We look to partners to take this into consideration and hereby thank all those who have assisted us, including Italy, for establishing special direct arrangements with the Pacific island States and call on others to follow suit.

For small island developing States and LDCs, climate change is inevitable. Climate change, sustainable development and poverty are interlinked for southern hemisphere countries, as has been mentioned in many other statements made before this one. From the perspective of my delegation, the report does not consider the links between the States and the United Nations in detail and makes no mention of Member States where there is no or limited United Nations presence.

Most United Nations bodies do not have regional or subregional offices, and this lack makes for a weak and distorted partnership between the United Nations and Member States. There is also failure to discuss terms in structural implementation of the economic opportunities climate change has to offer, including financial and technological initiatives for LDCs and small island developing States in the adaptation and mitigation sectors.

At the moment, from the perspective of my delegation, there is no clear direction as to how the United Nations should deal with immediate, medium and long-term climate change challenges. It is well equipped to provide technical support and analytical data but falls short where ground activities are concerned. There is now internal migration in low-lying islands, in particular in my country, Solomon Islands, and this has received little attention.

The lack of a United Nations central climate change agency is also a concern to my delegation. While we have the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, it remains a Convention secretariat. We need a stronger United Nations that will ensure that agreed international commitments and decisions are carried out without fail. My delegation would like to restate the position we expressed during the Security Council debate on climate change last year in April, namely that we must place climate change on an equal footing with other security issues.

Solomon Islands would also like to register its view that Governments are now burdened with the proliferation of climate change reporting obligations due to the multitude of meetings on the subject. It would be helpful for all climate change and environment issues to come under an umbrella-type arrangement whose purpose would be to maintain a coordinated and efficient way of dealing with the issue. This will ensure that no country gets left behind because its special needs are not taken into consideration.

My delegation congratulates the United Nations Development Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on undertaking climate change training for its staff and hopes that a more diversified United Nations staff will strengthen United Nations outreach to its membership and enhance appreciation of the challenges encountered by all countries, both big and small.

Solomon Islands would like to see the report go further and discuss countries with small and narrow foreign-owned economies with a small private sector. Much of organized civil society within our country is externally funded. The majority of the most vulnerable Member States are located on the periphery of the international system.

It is our hope that here at United Nations Headquarters the Small Island Developing States Unit within the Division of Sustainable Development and the Office of the High Representative can be

strengthened to tackle climate change issues in their interaction with the LDCs. These offices should ensure that internationally agreed frameworks outlining the special situation of both small island developing States and LDCs are implemented throughout the United Nations system. Without such action, the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals will remain a remote possibility.

Given the above challenges, this meeting offers the United Nations System Executives Board for Coordination the opportunity to change its approach and enable the United Nations to do more, deliver more rapidly and be more consistent in meeting climate change challenges.

We need to support the Bali Road Map by translating current commitments into action. It is about implementation and the implementation commitments made in particular by annex I parties. We should try to avoid a situation in which we in effect endorse the idea that loss of life is acceptable, simply because of our lack of collective action.

We must also try to preserve multilateralism by supporting established mechanisms. It is disheartening to see partners funding other multilateral institutions instead of the mechanism that we agreed to in Bali. The success of the Montreal Protocol provides hope that with strong leadership from annex I parties, a cleaner world is possible.

As indicated by the President's address on Monday, it will cost the world 1 per cent of its annual GDP to take corrective action. We must also look at existing United Nations assets and technology and have them providing functions related to climate change. I say this because we have technologies such as those within the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization that can be used in an early warning system. Thus, there is technology which is already available, including satellites that we can use to assess the health of our environment.

I close by quoting some words from our Secretary-General's acceptance speech: "the true measure of success of the United Nations is not how much we promise, but how much we deliver to those that need us most". That must be the guiding principle of the United Nations in addressing climate change. It presents a starting point for and gives a sense of purpose to our noble institution.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Mrs. Byrganym Aitimova, Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan.

Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan): The evidence of recent research enables us to assume that, in addition to the nuclear danger, today's world encounters the challenge of climate change. Climate change on Earth does not recognize State borders, nor is it dependent on national, political or religious factors.

Kazakhstan acclaims the leading role of the United Nations in dealing with the issues of global environment and climate change. A series of high-level events on climate change held in 2007 indicates the resolve of the world community to undertake measures to tackle and reduce the consequences of this current challenge facing all of us.

Resolve has been further demonstrated by the deliberations of the Member States leading to the Bali Road Map. We express our hope that parties will reach compromise on all disputes and duly conclude an international agreement on an effective framework programme for the post-2012 period.

Let me express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report (A/62/644), which contains a comprehensive assessment of the situation, and an overview of the most important initiatives and contributions of almost all organizations and agencies of the United Nations system towards combating climate change.

The delegation of Kazakhstan welcomes the proposal of the Secretary-General on adopting decisive measures aimed at slowing or preventing climate change in the interest of sustainable development. In this regard, we believe the United Nations should be a mediator in bringing essential assistance to developing countries in the domain of innovative technology transfer through such world financial institutions as the World Bank and the Asian Bank of Development. Such measures would stimulate the development of clean technologies and the creation of new jobs.

Despite the fact that Kazakhstan has not yet concluded its ratification process with respect to the Kyoto Protocol, it greatly contributes to the global effort to combat climate change. In his annual address, President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan stated that the country will concentrate its efforts on introducing energy-saving and environmentally clean

technologies. He also appealed to citizens and businesses around the country to work towards saving electricity.

Despite the growth of its industries, industrial greenhouse emissions decreased from 4.7 million tons in 1990 to 3 million tons in 2006. By 2024, we plan to cut carbon emissions per unit of gross domestic product to about one third of their current level, as well as to increase our use of alternative energy sources such as solar, wind and geothermal by a multiple of at least 250.

Ecological licences and regional emission quotas will enter into force in my country in 2008, in accordance with international practice. In addition, in order to cut emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, a quota-trading mechanism will be introduced in various industries.

The delegation of Kazakhstan supports the documents that have been adopted on reducing emissions from deforestation and the degradation of tropical forests, which are responsible for up to 20 per cent of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions.

A project under the aegis of our head of State called "Green Country" has been started in Kazakhstan and has gained the full support of our society at all levels. Through that programme, millions of trees are planted every year and efficient measures are put in place with regard to wildfire protection and combating illegal deforestation. A distinctive feature of the initiative is the active participation of young people. The purpose is to foster a humane attitude towards the environment through a national spirit based on ethics and patriotic education for new generations. In that context, we propose that the United Nations call on the younger generations of the world to take the lead in greening their environment, thereby making their own contributions to tackling climate change.

We fully support the need to build partnerships between government, the private sector and the United Nations with regard to the work to deal with the issue of climate change. During last December's meeting of the Council of Foreign Investors, which is the communication platform between the State and business, Kazakhstan's leadership recommended to foreign investors that they work on the sustainable development programmes in my country by implementing our clean production strategy. A proposal to set up a contest among oil companies to secure State "green oil" certificates for the best achievements in environmental protection was the first such undertaking in the world, which can become a useful example to follow.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Mrs. Isabelle F. Picco, representative of Monaco.

Mrs. Picco (Monaco) (*spoke in French*): I should like to thank President Kerim for organizing this debate which, from the very first day, has taught us important lessons about global cooperation in combating climate change.

We are all aware today of the urgency of overcoming that challenge, for we know that the future could be much darker than that envisioned by the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. It seems clear that the approach we must take should attempt to reconcile climate change with development. It is not just a matter of coherent efforts, but also one of responsibility, equity and solidarity.

The world's poorest countries, which produce the least amount of greenhouse gases, are unfortunately the most affected by the effects of global warming and the most powerless to combat it. Building capacity is a crucial tool in ensuring effective efforts in the area of mitigation and adaptation.

With regard to its international cooperation policy, Monaco is helping to strengthen the national capacities of developing countries — especially as regards air pollution monitoring, combating desertification, water supplies and forest conservation.

Last September, His Serene Highness Prince Albert II expressed his commitment to the country by setting clear objectives for the Government in the area of carbon emissions. Accordingly, voluntary measures have been adopted in all aspects of urban life, especially in the areas of transportation and the environment.

As has already been pointed out, the coherence and effectiveness of our future efforts in responding to the challenges of climate change necessitate that we put in place both traditional and innovative types of partnership. We see a potential to develop partnerships with private industry, especially in the renewable energy sector. We in Monaco are especially attentive to every innovation and initiative in that field.

The Prince Albert II Foundation, which Prince Albert personally introduced at the high-level meeting organized by the Secretary-General last September, supports numerous projects in this area, in particular efforts related to second-generation biofuels and exploiting the use of biogas. In that regard, it would be desirable for Governments and the United Nations to promote partnerships with the philanthropic community. The economic power of that group is significant, but very few of its resources are devoted to combating climate change.

The Adaptation Fund, which functions under the World Environment Facility, should be supported and strengthened. The use of clean development mechanisms should also be further pursued, while ensuring that the operational and technical complexity of such mechanisms do not result in impeding their implementation.

Lastly, we look forward with interest to the draft resolution to be introduced by the facilitators, the Ambassadors of Mexico and Switzerland, on the issue of a new international ecological governance regime. In that regard, I cannot conclude without mentioning the tenth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, which is to be held in Monaco from 20 to 22 February. The Government of the Principality is pleased to welcome the many participants at the ministerial level.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Vitaly Churkin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The international situation is today becoming increasingly characterized by the international community's growing awareness of the serious challenges posed by global climate change and the need for joint action to address them. Russia has traditionally been an active participant in the international climate process. At all of its stages, we have consistently advocated for consolidated efforts in this area by all countries without exception.

In that regard, we welcome the efforts by the Secretary-General and the current President of the General Assembly to convene an informal thematic debate for an overview of the United Nations system's implementation activities in relation to climate change, which can contribute to strengthening the role of the United Nations as the main platform for coordinating international cooperation on climate change in the light of the positive impetus provided by the recently concluded thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the third Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Bali from 3 to 15 December 2007.

We very much appreciate the outcomes of the Bali meeting — first of all, the consensual adoption of the Bali Action Plan. In accordance with the Plan, comprehensive negotiations are to be held in 2008 and 2009 in the context of the Framework Convention to agree on a post-Kyoto international regime on climate cooperation to go into effect in 2012.

It is also of fundamental importance that the Bali meeting reaffirmed the primacy of the Framework Convention as the universal mechanism to achieve the ultimate goal of stabilizing greenhouse gases at a level safe for humankind and the biosphere. The achievement of that global objective can be greatly facilitated through more efficient use of the potential of the entire United Nations system, within which constant and diverse work in that area is being carried out within the mandates of the organs and agencies of the Organization.

The proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/62/644) are aimed at reviewing and optimizing United Nations activities in this area. In our view, many of these proposals are of real interest and deserve careful consideration.

Furthermore, we view as reasonable the attempt to organize future climate work within the United Nations system on the basis of the strategic areas of the UNFCCC, that is, adaptation, mitigation, technology and finance, including, in particular, the sectors of energy, transport and health.

We believe that, if approved by all participants of the climate process, measures along these lines can produce a significant synergy effect and become an important complementary element in the overall global strategy for addressing climate change.

For our part, we would like to mention the proposals on strengthening scientific research capacities in the climate change area, coordinating United Nations activities at the sector and thematic levels on the basis of such already established groupings as UN-Energy, UN-Water, UN-Oceans,

carrying out a comprehensive analysis of links between biofuels and food security, and increasing the role of forest ecosystems in the climate process.

The Acting President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Roble Olhaye, Permanent Representative of Djibouti.

Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti): We thank you, Sir, and the Secretary-General, for initiating and closely coordinating the various conferences, events and thematic debates on climate change that have been held over the past year. Each passing day brings increased public awareness about the ever-pressing and inevitable consequences of climate change, the challenge to sustainable development which we confront today.

Last September, the high-level event underscored the commitment of Member States to effectively tackle climate change and led to the Bali Action Plan in December — an action plan which highlights the crucial need to launch negotiations for the achievement of a comprehensive global agreement by the end of 2009. This plan identified the key areas for action: adaptation, mitigation, technology and financing.

The Secretary-General then issued a comprehensive report in January 2008. It was entitled "Overview of United Nations activities in relation to climate change" and recognized the central role of this Organization in meeting this global challenge. The theme for this debate — "Addressing climate change: the United Nations and the world at work" — is not only timely, but very relevant.

Indeed, our present debate strives to create conditions for public-private partnerships on climate change, with the United Nations at the centre of coordinating actions by all stakeholders towards advancing global efforts to combat climate change.

Both directly and indirectly, therefore, the United Nations, through its promotions, conferences, conventions, events and debates has become an indispensable major force in highlighting the multifaceted challenge of climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has brought inestimable credit to the United Nations, driving home the inescapable truth that global warming, climate change and atmospheric pollution are upon us and must be fully addressed in order to reverse their negative impact.

The more we permit the main pollutant, carbon dioxide, to flow into the atmosphere, the more our air, climate and environment deteriorate. We must rein in the pace of this deterioration; in fact, we must reverse it. Mandatory curbs are required. The United Nations must keep emphasizing that these hazards are the result of human activity, that, in fact, they are caused by humankind.

Beyond the physical and environmental effects brought on by global warming, climate change will have critical implications for international peace and security, migration and shortages of resources, together with the inevitable ensuing humanitarian crises. Furthermore, according to the IPCC, the pace of deterioration around the world due to greenhouse gas emissions and resulting climate changes have exceeded predictions — with arctic sea ice and glaciers melting faster and global sea levels rising faster than had been forecast.

As has been consistently noted and underscored by the IPCC, Africa will be the continent hardest hit by climate change as it experiences water scarcity, crop failure, forced migrations, droughts, floods, heat waves and declining animal populations. In the words of our Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, "[t]oo often, where we need water we find guns instead".

This is the world we live in, a world of misplaced priorities, missed opportunities and neglected implementations.

More than likely, the developing world will be forced to focus primarily on adaptation to the effects of climate change. Mitigation, technology and financing, while part of the correction process, cannot be the strong points of the developing world for the obvious reason that it lacks resources in each area.

Adaptation itself necessitates widespread, costly changes. Some adaptations may be modest and low-tech. However, population relocation, migration, water-desalination plants, plant and crop adaptation and rebuilding, reinforcing or relocating infrastructure, which will all be part of the process, will not be cheap.

In combating carbon emissions and the attendant pollution, we will have to develop alternative sources of clean, reliable and affordable energy for use by populations everywhere. The United Nations is called upon to promote public-private partnerships in research

and development in this endeavour, including training and transfer of technology.

At the heart of most of these measures will be the issue of financing. The United Nations must serve as a conduit for information in all areas of emission control and the reduction of atmospheric pollution. Programmes should be developed and financing for them found, and the design of suitable projects should be recognized.

Not to be overlooked in the area of funding are the possible key roles of investment and management participation. Joint ventures should be organized where feasible. With the advice and oversight of the United Nations, there should be no hesitation about such arrangements, particularly where there are few alternatives.

As we have seen with the Bali Conference, which led to the Bali Action Plan, while adaptation needs vary, there is little question that there must be a substantial increase in available resources to effect adaptation.

The United Nations must be ready with a wide range of strategic objectives. Perhaps its primary objective must be to act as a focal point, a primary source of unbiased and reliable information, a coordinator, a promoter and an advocate of the necessary steps and measures to address the harmful effects of climate change. The public will require an informed, objective and accurate picture of what is being done to adapt to climate changes and what will be necessary to reduce and reverse those changes.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Saviour F. Borg, Permanent Representative of Malta.

Mr. Borg (Malta): The President of the General Assembly has described climate change as unquestionably the biggest challenge facing humanity in the twenty-first century. The Secretary-General has described climate change as "one of the most complex, multifaceted and serious threats the world faces".

Last September, our heads of State and Government, acknowledged and confirmed that climate change is indeed happening and is largely caused by human activity. Indeed, 20 years ago, the General Assembly already viewed climate change as a common concern of humankind.

The President's dynamic contribution to this priority issue on the international agenda continues to ensure, as rightly stated in his background paper, that the General Assembly is the appropriate forum to discuss the climate change challenge in a comprehensive way, and thereby can support the ongoing negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Malta associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the States members of the European Union. My delegation also welcomes the holding of this thematic debate, especially as it is being held just a few weeks after the Bali Conference.

While the Framework Convention must be the central negotiating forum, the United Nations system as a whole must play a strong supporting role. Here, I would like to recall the proposal made by Malta's Prime Minister during the general debate last September. From this Hall, he called for a more cohesive and concerted approach by all international institutions to address the issue of climate change and its repercussions. Malta's Prime Minister also stated that it was imperative that all actors involved in climate-risk reduction take a unified stand on a strategy and action plan to strengthen the resilience of affected countries in building their capabilities to face and adapt to the adverse impact of climate change.

My delegation is therefore pleased that the report (A/62/644) of the Secretary-General on an overview of United Nations activities in relation to climate change indicates not only that a number of activities are already being undertaken by the United Nations system but also acknowledges the critical role that the multilateral system is playing in our Organization's support for the negotiations taking place under the Framework Convention. Furthermore, Malta believes that one of the strongest messages emanating from the report is the response to the valid pronouncement by the Secretary-General last November that we must also look at our own house and the concept of delivering as one, which perhaps is crucial for the United Nations system to respond in a unified manner to this critical challenge of climate change.

We also note from the written submissions from members of the System Chief Executives Board for Coordination that the United Nations should and does have the collective strength to bring to bear on climate

change and to contribute in responding it. Malta welcomes the Board's first-stage effort in defining key areas of action and an effective coordination structure for the United Nations system. My delegation feels that the Board could go even further by evaluating the effectiveness and the financial resources allocated by the United Nations system, as well as the contribution of multilateral environmental agreements in addressing climate change.

The outcome of the Bali Conference last December has generated a sense of urgency and ownership. It is now up to all Member States to translate the eloquent statements of world leaders into meaningful and concrete actions, so as to respond in a sustained and effective manner to the negative impacts of climate change as confirmed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the important scientific findings in the Panel's fourth assessment report, of 2007. The Bali Action Plan gives us hope that the entire international community will engage in an energetic and ambitious response to climate change — comprising actions on adaptation, mitigation, technology and financing and taking into account that the first commitments under the Kyoto Protocol will end in 2012. In that context, Malta is honoured and proud that Mr. Michael Zammit Cutajar, its ambassador for climate change, was chosen as Vice-Chair, and later as Chair, of those delicate and important negotiations on the successor instrument to the Kyoto Protocol.

In meeting that challenge, all Members of the United Nations have agreed to work in partnership and to contribute through common but differentiated responsibilities and their respective capabilities. Like many small island States vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change, Malta is conscious of the enormity of the challenges that lie ahead. Small island States like Malta are at the mercy of changing climatic conditions, which are already affecting their daily lives. The economic and social development of those States is under constant threat. Making adaptation a priority and recognizing the importance of effective global mitigation efforts — framed by a long-term reduction goal of achieving emissions levels of 50 per cent below 1990 levels by 2050 and backed by technological development and diffusion — are, to say the least, the primordial elements of our aspirations.

In its own limited way, Malta has committed itself to working within the European Union, as well as outside it, to take measures to adapt to and mitigate the negative effects of climate change. As a member of the European Union, Malta has endorsed the Union's commitment to reduce greenhouse gases by at least 20 per cent by 2020 relative to 1990.

In practical terms, Malta has taken initiatives to highlight the urgency of climate change issues which complement the work of international institutions. Just last week, the Diplo Foundation, a joint venture between Malta and Switzerland, organized in Malta the very first international conference to address climate change diplomacy. The conference recognized that, although climate change is a global issue by necessity, it is not only States that must take a leading role in addressing such issues but also such actors as civil society, the business community and academia. Focusing largely on capacity-building and discussing both traditional and innovative approaches used in climate change diplomacy, the conference addressed the training and other needs of small States and other actors that, due to limited financial or human resources, cannot participate fully in climate change diplomacy.

Another initiative being launched by Malta this coming July is a summer school on climate-change law and policy at the University of Malta. The main objective will be to examine interrelated factors that influence climate change law and policy, as well as various sectors that will be highly affected by any mitigation and adaptation measures adopted. The summer school will also serve to highlight and discuss legal and policy issues that are still being developed or which until now have remained unaddressed. Mr. Michael Frendo, Malta's Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Professor Juanito Camilleri, Rector of the University of Malta, will jointly address a letter of invitation to all Member States to participate in the summer school initiative.

Yesterday, in the final communiqué adopted at the conclusion of their ministerial meeting held in Malta, the ministers for foreign affairs of the member States of the European Union and of the League of Arab States, among other things, affirmed their concerns at the consequences of climate change and considered that the European Union and the League of Arab States had an obligation to their peoples to combat global warming. In that spirit, they agreed to intensify collaboration to tackle this matter in a manner conducive to greater environmental, social and

economic development in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol. Ministers agreed on strengthening cooperation and dialogue on climate change, including clean and renewable energy, while promoting sustainable development within existing frameworks.

Malta also looks forward to working with other Member States to consider how best the United Nations system, in collaboration with the private sector and civil society, can collectively address climate change, which is the flagship issue of the current session of the General Assembly. The organization of these two days of deliberations continues to give credence to the will of the overwhelming majority of States to respond urgently to climate change and to support the ongoing process of negotiations.

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, let me just say that I have been informed by my colleagues at the Secretariat that we have 64 more speakers. Once again, I implore members to adhere to the five-minute rule, if at all possible.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Vanu Gopala Menon, Permanent Representative of Singapore.

Mr. Menon (Singapore): Climate change is the global environmental challenge of our time. As a small island, Singapore is vulnerable to the effects of climate change. We are taking immediate steps to address that challenge, but climate change is a global issue that requires solutions and action at the global level. The world's collective response will determine how well we address it.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is a key United Nations platform for discussing climate change. The Kyoto Protocol was an important attempt by the world to start addressing the problem. But looking ahead, we must work out a practical and effective post-2012 framework. Such a framework should contain the following elements.

First, it must put substance into the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The reality is that developed countries are responsible for the bulk of current and historical greenhouse gas emissions. So, clearly, they have an obligation to take the lead in reducing emissions. They also have to help developing countries address the problem through technology transfer or financial incentives. On the other hand, developing countries need to make effective use of the help they receive and take specific actions appropriate to their situations. The emerging economies are growing rapidly and will be among the largest emitters. Their participation is vital to any effective global solution to climate change.

Secondly, the post-2012 framework should take into account differences in national circumstances and specific constraints that countries may face. Countries vary in size, population and stage of development. Some are endowed with abundant renewable energy resources. Others have no alternatives to fossil fuels. Moreover, due to the international division of labour, countries that serve as manufacturing bases and transportation hubs that supply bunkers for ships and fuel for aeroplanes are naturally larger carbon-emitters than those that supply more services. It would be counterproductive to penalize such countries, as these activities would simply move to other countries that might produce them less efficiently. In short, the post-2012 framework cannot adopt a one-size-fits-all approach.

Thirdly, the framework should take into account the need for continued development and economic growth. Many Governments, especially those in developing countries, are faced with immediate priorities like improving living standards. They need economic growth, resources and energy, in particular fossil fuels, to achieve these goals. It will be difficult for them to accept a framework that impedes their development. But that does not mean that addressing climate change and economic growth are mutually exclusive.

There are already pragmatic and cost-effective ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These steps can be taken immediately. Let me highlight three broad areas.

First, we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by increasing energy efficiency. This area involves using technology to improve energy efficiency and reduce wastage. Energy should also be properly priced so as to avoid subsidizing the overconsumption of fossil fuels. These measures would allow countries to continue their economic growth in a more sustainable manner. Promoting energy efficiency can also drive the development of exportable energy efficient technologies. Singapore has launched a national energy

efficiency plan, which we call "E^2 Singapore". This plan is aimed at improving energy efficiency in our main energy-using sectors, namely power generation, industry and transport and in buildings and households. Not only does energy efficiency lower our carbon emissions, it also improves Singapore's cost competitiveness and reduces our energy imports.

Secondly, we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by using cleaner energy sources. The world needs to invest in climate change research and clean energy technologies to make low-carbon energy sources technically and economically viable. We have to try to embed such technologies into our everyday life. Singapore has already moved towards generating most of its power from natural gas, which is less carbon-intensive than fuel oil and coal. We are also committed to the global research effort. We have allocated some $110 million for research into solar and fuel cell technologies. We are also partnering with China to build an eco-city in Tianjin. This project will provide a test bed for environmentally sustainable and economically viable approaches for urban development. If successful, it could be replicated in other cities.

Thirdly, we need to protect the world's carbon sinks. Deforestation accounts for some 20 per cent of carbon emissions. Slash-and-burn practices and the large-scale burning of peatlands release massive amounts of carbon into the atmosphere. We must stop these practices. Our forest reserves must be better managed and protected. That requires the support of the international community, as well as responsible policies and effective enforcement by the countries that have forests. Singapore supports the initiative on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, which emerged from the recent Bali summit. We also support regional initiatives like the Heart of Borneo project, which covers 220,000 square kilometres of forests in Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia. We have also worked bilaterally with Indonesia to tackle peatland fires and develop sustainable land-clearing practices.

Debates at the United Nations can serve as a forum for us to share ideas on how we are dealing with the challenge of climate change at our national levels. But we must not lose sight of the bigger picture. We need to agree on a collective response at the global level if we are to overcome this challenge. Each country must contribute its fair share towards a realistic and workable global solution.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Don Pramudwinai, Permanent Representative of Thailand.

Mr. Pramudwinai (Thailand): I join previous speakers in thanking the President of the General Assembly for convening this debate. Thailand welcomes the role played by the United Nations during the past year. The Organization has played a significant part in stirring up much greater awareness among members of the international community of these important global issues. We strongly believe that the United Nations should continue to strengthen its role in engaging and promoting climate change discussions among national leaders. It is key in advancing progress in climate change negotiations and stimulating actions among Member States.

As climate change today is linked to practically all dimensions of human life, one linkage that is particularly vital seen from the perspective of developing countries is that between climate change and development. The question before us is how the United Nations can mobilize global efforts to support developing countries, through capacity-building, in balancing the three pillars of sustainable development without sacrificing any of them. To this end, we have only to base our further deliberations and concrete actions on the Bali Road Map, with the Cartagena decisions and the Bali Strategic Plan at its core.

While mitigation, adaptation, technology transfer and financial mechanisms and the study of the effects of deforestation are the main areas of concern in the Bali Road Map, the question is how to optimize the mitigation effects. What role can the United Nations play to nudge developed countries to play their part in greenhouse gas mitigation?

Adaptation efforts are of critical importance and could be generated from various angles. South-South cooperation can therefore play a role, but only as a complement to North-South obligations. The two platforms can conveniently merge into a triangular cooperation agreement that fulfils the spirit of global partnership for development.

Technology transfer and financial support are clearly the most critical factors for developing countries in their fight against climate change. We need

a breakthrough in financing for development and intellectual property rights regimes that will make climate-friendly technology and products affordable.

Thailand believes that the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies can contribute greatly to enhancing the feasibility of climate change technology transfer and resource mobilization among parties by helping to resolve conflicting issues in those two areas. Simplifying and operationalizing the Adaptation Fund, together with other innovative mechanisms, should be among priorities of the activities of the United Nations.

The private sector will also have a very crucial role to play. We note with appreciation the work of the United Nations Global Compact in this regard. However, public-private partnership, as suggested in the report of the Secretary-General (A/62/644), is only a part of global partnership, not its main mechanism. Any arrangements that do not include global corporate entities or are without a strong and active political role for Governments will not be sufficient and will fail to address problems at the global scale.

Having said that, and with a full appreciation of the limitations facing the United Nations, I reaffirm my country's readiness and strong commitment to engage actively in this endeavour. I offer our services in this collective fight for a better and greener future.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Giadalla Ettalhi, Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Mr. Ettalhi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for all his efforts to strengthen the role of the United Nations in focusing on one of the most urgent matters before us: climate change.

I would also like to stress my country's support for the statements made on behalf of the Group of Arab States, the Group of African States and the Group of 77 and China.

We welcome the momentum that has been given to this matter, which has created a shared recognition of the success of last December's Bali Conference, at which the Bali Road Map was adopted. The ensuing negotiations will begin in March and should conclude in 2009 with a new agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol, which expires in 2012.

We all understand the need for genuine political will and mutual trust among all parties, and we know that we need to address the dangers of climate change through concerted and coordinated international efforts based on the principle agreed upon at the 1992 Rio Summit, that is, that all countries bear common but differentiated responsibilities. We also need to bear in mind that a commitment by developed countries to reduce the levels of their greenhouse gas emissions is the basis of any real progress in mitigating the effects of climate change.

Here, we recall the principles that must be respected when working together to address climate change. These include the principle that no energy source should be favoured at the expense of another. The report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change underlines the difficulty of adopting a single strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The sole focus on fossil fuels as the principal cause of greenhouse gas emissions and the failure to point an accusatory finger to other sources of greenhouse gas emissions and their attendant economic and environmental dangers is thus not logical or realistic.

We are all aware of the scope of the contribution that new, environmentally sound, renewable and economically viable energy sources can make in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We need to call on the developed countries and financial institutions to adopt policies expanding the use of such energy sources, especially in developing countries whose technical capabilities are limited. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation should be pursued, as they allow for training opportunities and access to advanced technologies.

Because of the danger of climate change and its negative effects, especially for developing countries, which are the least able to adapt, developed, industrialized countries, more than ever, must abide by their commitments to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals and must accept their historical responsibility for the emissions which result in global warming.

It is important for African countries facing drought to receive support for their short-term and long-term plans and programmes so that they can implement basic measures, particularly in agricultural development, since agriculture is the main source of food for their peoples. This requires the strengthening

of integrated water resource management in order to address shortages, including the introduction of appropriate irrigation systems and the empowerment of Africa's peoples with the know-how to obtain and cultivate seeds for drought-resistant crops.

The international community must intensify its efforts in the field of scientific research and its capacity to monitor and provide early warning of the dangers of climate change. It must also provide international technological cooperation between developed and developing countries, giving the latter access to advanced adaptation technologies to implement climate change mitigation policies.

Non-governmental organizations, civil society and the media can also contribute to making societies aware of the dangers of climate change and of the difference that changes in behaviour and patterns of consumption can make. They can also ensure that these are consistent with the requirements of adaptation strategies.

Libya is eager to contribute to a comprehensive convention, based on justice and equity, as a follow-up to the Kyoto Protocol. We have held an initial seminar on the strengthening of team action on the national level, including monitoring reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. International experts from the United Nations Environment Programme are helping to train members of the team in the preparation of specific databases. We are also devoting attention to the requirements for Libya's second national communication in accordance with our obligations under the Kyoto Protocol.

I would like to reaffirm that socio-economic problems arising in one country as a result of climate change cannot fail to affect the economic and social stability of other countries. It is therefore incumbent on us all to shoulder our moral responsibility through collective action to confront climate change in order to spare future generations the natural disasters which could threaten their lives, security and future.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, Permanent Representative of Qatar.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, I would like to pay tribute to the President of the General Assembly for his personal interest in the issue of climate change and for making it one of this year's top priorities. We appreciate his awareness of the importance of this issue and its grave consequences for our planet. We share this interest and concern. According to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate change is an undeniable fact that requires immediate mitigation action to avert a catastrophe.

This meeting is a natural extension of the major debate held in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007. The Bali Conference resulted in the adoption of an Action Plan and a Road Map that pave the way for future negotiations. That outcome reflects the increase in United Nations action to combat the adverse effects of climate change. Clearly, such action must be undertaken in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol, the fundamental mechanisms for addressing the phenomenon.

Qatar attaches due importance to the issue of climate change. We are deeply involved in developing clean fuel. In October, His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani established a climate change commission within the Supreme Council of the Environment and Natural Resources in order to monitor the implementation of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, thereby ensuring that all governmental and non-governmental bodies in Qatar honour our commitment. Moreover, we have formulated national policies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Qatar is a member of the Adaptation Fund Board created at the Bali Conference in December and has contributed $150 million to the energy, environment and climate change research fund announced at the recent meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries in Riyadh. All of those measures reflect Qatar's firm resolve to preserve the environment on the basis of its profound conviction of the importance of effective international efforts to combat climate change.

The conclusions reached by the IPCC concerning the impact of climate change on sustainable development confirm that, although no country will be spared the effects of climate change, the developing countries are the most seriously affected, given their limited resources and capacity to adapt. Climate change should therefore be addressed in an integrated perspective and in the context of sustainable development, as noted at the 1992 Rio Conference. The development and transfer of modern technology should

be a fundamental pillar of global efforts to combat climate change.

The campaign against climate change must be based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility and take into account the fact that the developing countries will be the most affected by the adverse effects of climate change. Furthermore, the developing countries, including the oil-exporting countries, will be most seriously harmed by the measures taken to stem climate change. The developed countries, understanding that they are principally responsible for greenhouse gas emissions, must assume their responsibilities in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, as we noted earlier.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Dan Gillerman, Permanent Representative of Israel.

Mr. Gillerman (Israel): At the outset, allow me to congratulate President Kerim on his able stewardship of this Assembly and to thank him for convening this important thematic debate entitled "Addressing Climate Change: The United Nations and the World at Work".

My delegation wishes to thank President Kerim for organizing the interesting and important panels held on Monday. We heard a great deal about the complexity of issues and the importance of uniting the efforts of the United Nations system to address climate change with the goal of receiving clear guidance and a mandate from this Assembly and its member States. We must create a common agenda and a common vision, and the United Nations is the appropriate forum for coordinating those efforts. Hence, my delegation welcomes the call for an inclusive and coherent approach to enable the United Nations system to work together through partnership.

The global resolve to address climate change, as seen in the past few months, has led us to the Bali Road Map and Action Plan. Yet Bali provided only a framework. It remains up to the Member States to reach an agreement by the end of 2009. Hence, all parties, developed and developing nations alike, must do their part. The Bali process must also develop as a basis for action to effectively adapt to the inevitable consequences of climate change and to successfully mitigate its causes. In that respect, financial and technological tools that provide essential catalysts are crucial.

Israel also wishes to underscore that the resource and capacity gaps among States means that we must agree on a differentiated timetable for Member States to adjust their national policies and implement their commitments, though all States should take part and mitigate. Similarly, we should welcome and support those who seek to expedite their timetables and implementation goals.

Partnership is the key ingredient to finding a common way forward on climate change. Israel is interested in learning from the international community and is also poised to share, where relevant, its own experience, technologies, best practices and know-how. We are committed to advancing cooperation through various avenues, particularly through the United Nations system, building on national strategies and enhancing international cooperation.

As a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) since 1996 and the Kyoto Protocol since 2004, Israel has pledged its commitment to work on all fronts to combat climate change. The flexibility mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol have proven effective for providing incentives for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and Israel's national policies are tailored to attract projects in sustainable fields.

As the discussions on Monday reiterated the linkage between climate change and sustainable development, and in particular forestation, I wish to highlight an impressive example of afforestation activities in Israel: the Yatir forest, located on the edge of the Negev desert, which comprises approximately half of Israel's land area. Planting began 40 years ago, and it is now the largest forest in the country. It has completely changed the arid landscape, as research shows that the desert forest absorbs carbon dioxide just as efficiently as forests in wet areas. That is an example of the implementation of a national dimension we heard about in the context of cities and United Nations organizations two days ago.

Israel also recently participated in the International Conference to Combat Desertification in Beijing, which was co-sponsored by the Chinese Government and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Israel has also hosted a number of workshops on combating desertification

with that Department and UNFCCC, particularly for developing African nations. Those forums give Israel the opportunity to share some of the highly resourceful and developed tools for turning the desert into productive and habitable land.

In addition to mitigation efforts, Israel is already adapting to the existing effects of climate change. Climate change in our region has affected the problem of water deficiency.

Hence, Israeli experts are pioneering water management and cutting-edge technologies in drip irrigation, recycling and purifying wastewater, water desalination and desert agriculture. These technologies, particularly in the area of combating desertification, are shared with like-minded and interested partners through the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs Centre for International Cooperation (MASHAV), with an emphasis on technology transfer, capacity-building and training.

Similarly, Israel serves as a Vice-Chair in the Bureau of the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. During the current Assembly session, Israel introduced a draft resolution on agricultural technology for development, adopted as resolution 62/190, which calls on Member States to commit themselves to supporting the use of local know-how and technology and to promote agricultural research, productivity and food security in poor rural areas.

Looking towards the future, Israel seeks to increase partnerships within the United Nations system and other international bodies on issues such as water, agriculture, land management and afforestation. Last year, Israel signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Environment Programme. To date, more than 30 projects have been submitted to our designated national authority for approval, and seven have been registered by the Clean Development Mechanism Executive Board. We strongly support ensuring the stability and continuity of the Mechanism, through integration into the provisions of a post-Kyoto agreement. Lastly, our growing relationship and cooperation with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs helps to lay the foundation for partnerships and international, regional, national and local activities.

Monday's sessions also reinforced for us the importance and urgency of translating words into action. With the recognition that every little bit counts, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs recently unveiled a new initiative to upgrade all its diplomatic vehicles in North America to hybrid cars, as just one of the many examples across the spectrum and sectors where Israel is working to adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change. I drive a hybrid. I enjoy it, and I recommend it to everyone here.

In conclusion, allow me to illustrate how a willingness to form partnerships has shown that the challenge of climate change can be transformed into an opportunity for cooperation, even amidst political differences. In 1994, in a region where water sources are already scarce, Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty containing a water sharing provision, reputed to be one of the most creative water treaties on record. Cooperation between Israel and its neighbours has also produced agreements such as the Upper Gulf of Aqaba Oil Spill Contingency Project, the Desertification Initiative and an Environmental Code of Conduct for the Middle East.

Civil society and academic institutions have long pioneered efforts in the environmental field, and they are supported by a vocal and dedicated Israeli non-governmental organization community. The Israeli private sector has also contributed to partnership and the exchange of ideas on environmental and technological issues, and those efforts will be expanded with the launching of the United Nations Global Compact in Israel later this year. The Israeli Compact has strong participation from the environmental players.

Israel, for its part, supports these initiatives and our deliberations, and it looks forward to seeing the cultivation of new and enriching partnerships to boost the achievement of our shared objectives. We stand ready to share our expertise and experience with our neighbours and other interested States in order to assure a better, safer and cleaner region — and world — for all our children and grandchildren.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. João Manuel Guerra Salgueiro, Permanent Representative of Portugal.

Mr. Salgueiro (Portugal): I would like first to align myself with the statement made yesterday morning by the Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union.

Scientists leading research into climate change have, over the years, painstakingly set out a stark vision of how the world will change if humanity fails to tackle surging greenhouse gas emissions. The scientific case for action was authoritatively and unambiguously confirmed again by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its Fourth Assessment Report, underscoring the scale of the challenge confronting humankind and the urgency of addressing it at all levels.

Climate change is increasingly becoming a contributing factor to environmental, economic and security threats. A warming world would threaten billions of people with thirst and malnutrition, endanger more than half of wildlife species with extinction and hasten the melting of the ice caps and glaciers, which could raise global sea levels by more than 22 feet, unleashing catastrophic and irremediable effects and imperilling human life on Earth.

Unfortunately, some of these changes are already under way, but there is still a window for action, albeit a narrow one, to prevent some of the worst effects of an accelerated degree of disruption of the world's climate.

As the IPCC tells us, mitigation is technically feasible and economically affordable if we act with resolve now. In fact, it is widely recognized that early action will reduce the severity and frequency of the impacts of climate change, avoiding potentially massive costs to our societies.

Climate change cannot be faced merely as an environmental issue. The ramifications of this challenge are cross-cutting in nature and will have deep implications for all three pillars of sustainable development, impacting economic growth and jeopardizing the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It is certain that the most vulnerable countries — and, in particular, the most exposed groups in those countries, namely, women and children — will be the hardest hit.

That is why the international community needs to address the challenges of development and climate change in a more coherent and focused manner.

According to the IPCC, future vulnerability depends not only on climate change but also on the type of development that is pursued. In this regard, adaptation measures can be successful only if implemented in the context of national and international sustainable development plans. Moreover, adaptation to climate change should be mainstreamed within development assistance programmes.

Recognizing the urgency of tackling this challenge, we, Portugal, together with our European Union partners, have shown our determination to continue playing an active role in the fight against the negative effects of climate change by strengthening our own commitments. It is clear, however, that climate change must be acknowledged as a real global threat and that urgent action must be taken by the international community as a whole.

It has to be acknowledged that 2007 was an extraordinary year in terms of raising the political profile of climate change as a crucial issue and as a common concern of humankind. Indeed, the unprecedented involvement of key political players and institutions at all levels and in several forums not only permitted a thorough discussion of many of the issues underpinning the climate change challenge, but also allowed for the recognition of the central role of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as the appropriate multilateral forum for reaching a global and comprehensive climate agreement.

The informal thematic debate at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, entitled "Climate change as a global challenge", as well as the high-level event on climate change convened by the Secretary-General last 24 September, provided judicious and momentous contributions in this regard, galvanizing political attention to climate change-related problems and calling for breakthrough action from all parties at last December's Bali Conference.

Bali did provide such a breakthrough, and parties agreed to engage in a two-year negotiating process to deliver a global and comprehensive climate agreement. That process will encompass both mitigation and enhanced action on adaptation, while also considering the supporting role of technology and financial resources and investment in action on adaptation and mitigation.

In this joint endeavour, all countries have the responsibility to act according to their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

To keep up the momentum throughout the year and to contribute to solving this common problem, we need to further translate our words into solid action by establishing tangible and ambitious goals. The United Nations system must cultivate this global political thrust and enhance the areas where its contribution can better serve the objectives to be attained through common commitment and decisive partnerships.

In this regard, the report of the Secretary-General on the overview of the United Nations activities in relation to climate change (A/62/644) is a very useful starting point upon which the wider membership can judiciously build with a view to advancing the climate change agenda through the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Poznań, Poland — COP 14 — at the end of this year and towards the Conference of the Parties in Copenhagen — COP 15 — in 2009.

There is a tremendous challenge ahead of us, but history is made of vision, courage and big steps forward. We must all contribute and be prepared for the transition to a low-carbon economy, conscious that the next steps will require unprecedented international cooperation on a path that we must truly walk together, with the United Nations system at the centre of that endeavour.

The international community has now two years of very intensive negotiation ahead and cannot but meet the expectations of public opinion and respond in an adequate way to the clear scientific findings.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Mr. Farukh Amil, representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Amil (Pakistan): Pakistan wishes to associate itself with the statement made by Antigua and Barbuda at the 80th meeting on behalf of G-77 and China. We would like to make the following additional comments.

The Bali Road Map, in particular the Bali Action Plan — the outcome of the Bali conference on climate change — is the most recent manifestation of the resolve of the international community to address climate change through a concerted global action based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Most importantly, we believe the Bali Action Plan promotes an integrated and coordinated approach to address climate change in a manner that enhances and ensures the sustainable development and sustained economic growth of the developing countries.

Pakistan, with the fifth largest population in the world, is responsible for only 0.4 per cent of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions and is 135th on the list of global greenhouse gas emitters. Despite such a low contribution of emissions, climate change is causing irrevocable damage to Pakistan with a tremendous social, environmental and economic impact, including on our country's forest resources and natural ecosystems. Even the glaciers in the Himalayas are receding faster than in any other part of the world. It is feared that many of these glaciers may disappear by 2035, or perhaps sooner if the earth keeps warming at the current rate. That will have a serious and adverse impact on our agricultural productivity as well as on our forest resources and natural ecosystems.

In fact, in a series of recent research studies and reports, South Asia is viewed as a region severely affected by climate change. One such study maintains that South Asia and southern Africa will be hit first and hardest by climate change. The reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) also point out increased precipitation intensity, rainfall variability, risk of floods, land degradation and water stress, among others, as factors that will adversely affect millions in South Asia.

Pakistan remains deeply committed to the global efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change and has taken the following measures for the improvement and protection of the environment.

A Prime Minister's Committee on Climate Change has been constituted as a policy and review forum. A Global Change Impact Studies Centre has been established for undertaking research on climate change and suggesting appropriate adaptation measures. A Clean Development Mechanism Cell has been established under the Climate Change Wing of the Ministry of Environment to facilitate approval of Clean Development Mechanism projects in the country. Despite resource constraints, the Government is launching a mega forestry project worth $240 million for carbon sequestration, without financial assistance from international donors. Other interventions that also contribute to climate change adaptation include our Mountain Areas Conservancy Programme, the Pakistan Wetlands Programme and the Sustainable Land Management Project.

Clearly, the challenge of climate change is too big for any one country to tackle single-handedly. The United Nations undoubtedly has a central role to play in this regard, particularly by advancing the global development agenda, including a concerted global action to meet the challenge of climate change. The United Nations made an important contribution by building up the political momentum for the successful conclusion of the Bali Conference under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol — the multilateral framework for cooperative actions to address climate change. It should play a similar catalytic role to address all three pillars of sustainable development.

One important area where United Nations can and must make an important contribution, as part of an integrated approach to sustainable development, is the implementation of the commitments already made to address the challenge of climate change, including in the four areas of mitigation, adaptation, technology and finance.

The United Nations, through the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, can devise new mechanisms or use the existing ones to effectively monitor the implementation of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals and those commitments made under UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol.

Agencies of the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Food and Agricultural Organization, may, upon request by the developing countries, assist them in developing national action plans and strategies to deal with climate change, particularly with adaptation and in identifying their capacity-building, technology and financing needs, including the capacity to avail themselves of funding opportunities offered by the Clean Development Mechanism and other available mechanisms.

The United Nations, particularly the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and UNCTAD can also be helpful in providing information and data to bolster the capacity of the developing countries to meaningfully engage in the complex and serious climate change negotiations, particularly under the Bali Action Plan.

The report of the Secretary-General has made a number of interesting suggestions to enhance the capacity of the United Nations system to assist countries in meeting the climate change challenge. However, it is not clear where the resources needed to undertake those steps will come from. We must ensure that the existing resources are not diverted and that adequate provision for additional resources is made in order to allow the United Nations system agencies to take on the climate change responsibilities mandated by the intergovernmental decisions.

The United Nations system can also be particularly helpful through UNCTAD, UNDP and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in developing a climate change vulnerability index or providing more structured information on the vulnerabilities of various countries and regions due to climate change to allow for more effective and equitable allocation of resources.

UNCTAD and other relevant United Nations agencies should also carry out a technology needs assessment of the developing countries, in close collaboration with the subsidiary bodies of the UNFCCC to promote a global technology response to climate change.

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs should also undertake a comprehensive needs assessment for financing, in close collaboration with international financial institutions and UNDP, to meet the challenges of adaptation, mitigation and technology access and transfer. We believe that the UNDP Human Development Report is an important first step in that regard.

Pakistan also fully recognizes and greatly appreciates the important role that public-private partnerships can play in preparing an effective response by which to address the challenge of climate change at the global as well as the national level. However, given the magnitude of the challenge involved, the role of the public sector remains paramount. Public-private partnerships, we believe, can play an important role in that regard.

Pakistan will continue to play its rightful role as a concerned and active member of the international

community in addressing the challenge that we collectively face.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Mr. Carsten Staur, Permanent Representative of Denmark.

Mr. Staur (Denmark): I very much welcome this opportunity to address the Assembly and shall, at the very outset, align myself with the statement made at the 80th meeting by the representative of Slovenia, which currently holds the Presidency of the European Union.

Climate change is a tremendous challenge to the international community, to all Member States and to every one of us as individuals. The Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), issued last fall, was an important element in raising international awareness prior to the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 13), held in Bali. The report showed that climate change is occurring more rapidly than previously assumed. The need for action has thus become even more imperative.

The successful outcome of the Bali Conference marks an important turn in our common efforts to address climate change. In Bali, we not only agreed that there is a global need to address climate change; we also agreed on the need for targets aimed at reducing global carbon emissions in response to scientifically proven needs. And we agreed on a coherent framework for negotiations including all countries and based on two main tracks: adaptation and mitigation, supported by efforts in the areas of technology, financing and capacity-building. Finally, we managed to agree on an accelerated negotiation process for 2008 leading to COP 14, to be held in Poznań, Poland, as an important benchmark in the negotiating process for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It is vital that a good platform be agreed upon in Poznań with a view to continued negotiations in the course of 2009.

The United Nations plays the pivotal role by providing the framework for negotiations on a new climate agreement through the UNFCCC. The United Nations system, however, also has an essential role to play through broader supportive action. Climate change is a complex development issue. Addressing climate change is a prerequisite for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Therefore, Denmark very much welcomes the report of the Secretary-General and of the Chief Executives Board (A/62/644) prepared for this meeting. We encourage the Secretary-General and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination to continue to play a leading role in ensuring a coordinated and effective United Nations response to the challenges of climate change.

Let me briefly outline five strategic objectives that, in our view, warrant special priority at this juncture.

First of all, the United Nations system should seize the challenge of climate change as an opportunity to demonstrate that the United Nations system is not only committed but also able to deliver as one. The United Nations must not only act coherently as a system and fully align itself with national priorities in partner countries; it must also ensure the coordination of operational activities in the areas of adaptation to and mitigation of climate change with other global actors, such as the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, so that the division of labour among the various actors can be clearly delineated.

Secondly, the United Nations should continue to facilitate the flow of the knowledge and data necessary for sound decision-making on climate change.

Thirdly, the United Nations should promote the integration of climate change considerations into policy formulation and decision-making. At the country level, as we are all aware, that requires the integration of those issues into national development strategies.

Fourthly, the United Nations — and not least the United Nations Development Programme, in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme — has an essential role to play in many countries in capacity-building at the country level. That means helping to build capacity for international negotiation processes and for domestic policy-making and policy implementation with regard to climate change.

Finally, the United Nations should take the lead in providing a conceptual framework for the integration of climate change concerns into the broader development agenda, including in the context of the upcoming dialogue on financing for development.

In all those areas, Denmark is actively engaged in strengthening the role of the United Nations.

In conclusion, I just want to stress that the momentum for a new comprehensive international climate agreement is growing ever stronger. As the host of COP 15, to be held in 2009, and as a member of the COP troika, Denmark is strongly committed to working closely with all other Member States with a view to reaching an ambitious agreement that responds adequately to the enormous global challenges arising from climate change. The next two years will require concerted efforts by all parties and stakeholders so that an agreement can be reached in Copenhagen in December 2009. We stand ready to do our part.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Mr. Camillo Gonsalves, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Mr. Gonsalves (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): Saint Vincent and the Grenadines fully associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Barbados on behalf of the Caribbean Community and by the representative of Grenada on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States at the 81st meeting, and the statement by the representative of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Group of 77 and China at the 80th meeting.

The adoption of the Bali Road Map two months ago is a welcome, if modest, step in our continued struggle for global climate security. However, the true worth of the Road Map will not be measured by self-congratulatory statements this week, but by the work of Member States and by our genuine commitment to the Bali Action Plan in the immediate future. The United Nations process has adequately framed the issues and charted the way forward. Now it is time for the world to work towards concrete implementation of both the spirit and the letter of the Road Map.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines accepts the scientific evidence that demonstrates a causal relationship between climate change and the levels of greenhouse gas emissions, emanating primarily from developed countries. Thus, we recognize that it is crucially important for developed countries to make radical cuts in their emissions. We have every confidence that, as responsible global citizens, they will work in good faith towards meaningful reductions in the coming years.

But the importance of future emissions reductions cannot overshadow the fact that, for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and many other countries, climate change is not an esoteric theoretical concept looming on a distant hypothetical horizon; it is a stark reality and a gathering threat. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, citizens are being displaced by increasingly intense storms and tidal surges today. Residents are slowly losing their coastal property to rising and encroaching seas today. Our Government is investing heavily in coastal fortifications today. Our undersea environment is suffering from reef death and coral bleaching today. And our farming, fishing and tourism sectors are being adversely affected today. The immediacy of those issues means that we cannot wait for 2012 and beyond for incremental relief from the lifestyle excesses of others. We need to address those problems today.

In that regard, the twin issues of adaptation and financing are of urgent importance to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Adaptation financing, in particular, cannot be simply an awkward appendage of mitigation efforts. It is insufficient to merely pay lip service to the importance of adaptation while dooming adaptation initiatives to failure through inadequate funding or support. If climate change is indeed the defining human development challenge of the twenty-first century, as stated in Bali by the President of the United Nations Climate Change Conference, we cannot delude ourselves into thinking that this challenge can be addressed on the cheap. It will quickly become apparent to the international community that the recently launched Adaptation Fund, although welcome, is nonetheless severely undercapitalized and will be unable to cope with even modest adaptation needs unless it is buttressed by substantial voluntary contributions from developed countries.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines therefore sees ample scope for innovative regional approaches to adaptation and opportunities for fresh partnerships in the area of capacity-building. We welcome efforts to deepen South-South cooperation on a broad range of environmental issues, such as the energy-saving light bulb initiative selflessly advanced by Cuba, which has reduced the carbon footprint and electricity bill of almost every residence in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Additionally, it is necessary to fundamentally review the debt obligations of developing countries

through the prism of climate change. Many of us are still paying for infrastructural investments that are no longer viable or whose effective lifespan will be severely curtailed by climate change. Many of us will have to borrow more to retrofit previous investments, which were often funded, designed and built by foreign lenders. It is illogical and immoral that we continue to pay developed creditor States for items whose very use is compromised by their actions.

The gravity of the climate change challenge also forces us to abandon long-standing proprietary paradigms of technological exclusivity. The world cannot sacrifice its collective climate security on the altar of private profit or outmoded parochial concepts of intellectual property. If climate change is a global problem, so too must the solutions belong to the entire planet. The developed world and the scientific community must find ways to quickly and freely place emerging green technologies and capabilities into the hands of those who need them most urgently. Measurable, reportable and verifiable cooperation in the fields of technology, capacity-building and financing are not charity. They are shrewd investments against future global catastrophes.

It is crucial that the challenge of climate change be viewed not simply as an environmental issue, but as a cross-cutting development concern. For some States, coping with climate change may not only represent an added expense, but may require a complete readjustment of development priorities. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, for example, has been effectively globalized out of reliance on agriculture as the dominant engine for national growth and development. Now, the threat is that we may be climatized out of a similar reliance on tourism. We are making multi-million dollar investments in leveraging our sunny climate, calm seas, pristine beaches and coral reefs to lure tourists. Climate change threatens to deprive us of those few marketable natural assets.

Further, the profound development implications of climate change must necessarily trigger a fundamental re-examination of the international community's approach to development assistance. Development commitments made in the past — before the impact of climate change was fully understood — must now be reconsidered, and those of us in the developing world must clearly consider the development impact not only of climate change, but also of the measures being employed to address it. For example, the rush to biofuel production will barely dent the developed world's appetite for fossil fuels, but has already made basic foodstuffs noticeably more expensive in many developing States. We cannot allow ourselves to be negatively affected by both climate change and its proposed solutions.

While Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is fully cognizant of the critical importance of steady and efficient procedural progress in coordinating the global effort against climate change, we in the United Nations cannot become so enamoured with the process that we lose sight of the substance of our mission. There is an old joke in the medical profession whose punchline is: "The operation was a success, but the patient nonetheless died". Amidst the shuffle of expert groups, working groups and a proliferation of new abbreviations and acronyms, we must never forget that our patient is the planet Earth, and that the survival of the entire planet is our collective responsibility. We cannot afford to fail.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Baki İlkin, Permanent Representative of Turkey.

Mr. İlkin (Turkey): My delegation has fully aligned itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union, yet, I still would like to add my voice to the debate and share some of our views on the vital issue before us.

Especially after the Bali agreement, today's thematic debate provides us with an opportunity to further reflect on the United Nations pivotal role in climate change. It is amply evident that we face an enormous threat posed by climate change. Its effects are already being felt and, if not properly tackled, will worsen over time, as indicated by the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The IPCC report makes it clear that future climate change could critically undermine efforts for sustainable development throughout the world, and especially in North Africa and in the Mediterranean region. In particular, climate change may add to existing problems of desertification, water scarcity and food production, while also introducing new threats to human health, livestock, ecosystems and the national economies of countries. Turkey itself is one of those countries that are highly vulnerable to climate change.

Our location in the eastern Mediterranean basin obliges us to pursue policies in dealing with the infrequency of rainfall, as well as the trend towards decreasing precipitation, scarcity of water and desertification.

The adverse effects of climate change in terms of extreme weather events, temperature increases and sea-level rise are also a grave concern, especially for small island developing States. The devastating impacts of recent disasters that those countries have experienced over the past years have further highlighted the particular significance of the issue. Let me underline once again that Turkey fully shares their concerns and is committed to supporting the global efforts to address their urgent needs in the face of climate change.

While mitigation is one of the major aspects of the fight to limit global temperature increase, adaptation to climate change is equally important and constitutes a demanding agenda for the developing countries. In that regard, the developed countries will have to shoulder a bigger responsibility, but the developing countries will have to play their part, too. Our joint efforts must be commensurate with economic growth and social development. Without investment in capacity-building for adaptation and proper technology transfer, development efforts will be undermined.

It is evident that Turkey's sustainable development will depend on its adaptive capacity to climate change. In recent years, the Turkish Government has made serious efforts to introduce and implement adaptive measures ranging from effective water management and irrigation to national and international afforestation campaigns.

In that regard, Turkey has become a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). However, Turkey's status as an annex I party in the framework of the Convention does not reflect the actual industrialization level of my country. Although Turkey is a country of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, it is neither yet a fully developed industrialized country, nor in the group of countries the economies of which are in transition. As such, we rely mainly on our national resources for adapting to climate change, whereas non-annex I party countries are able to benefit from the relevant mechanisms of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. Thus, one might say that Turkey is still in a sui generis situation vis-à-vis the current international climate change regime. We hope that the post-2012 regime will recategorize countries on the basis of their different development levels, instead of merely listing them as annex and non-annex parties.

Turkey fully supports and actively participates in global efforts, under the guidance of the United Nations, to adapt to the adverse consequences of climate change, while combating desertification as well as implementing policies for mitigation. This year, Turkey will host the seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Istanbul from 20 to 29 October. We would like to take this opportunity to inform the General Assembly that we are very pleased also to be holding the tenth session of the IPCC in Turkey in 2009. Furthermore, it gives me pleasure to invite all participants to the fifth World Water Forum, to be held in Istanbul in March 2009, which will provide us with the opportunity to share our experiences for better water management that will take into account the concerns for climate change and desertification.

Climate change has become part and parcel of sustainable and social development, as well as of economic prosperity and energy policies. Its cross-cutting nature requires an integrated approach and concerted action across many forums of the United Nations. With its outreach capacity and legitimacy, we believe, the United Nations is best suited and well equipped to rise to the daunting challenge that climate change poses. I am sure that we all have the ability and the political will to further strengthen the United Nations central role in coordinating and leading our response to that threat.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Mr. Yukio Takasu, Permanent Representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): All the nations of the world recognize that climate change is the most serious and urgent challenge in human history. In reaching agreement in Bali on the post-2012 framework negotiation process, we have arrived at a common understanding about how to address that vital problem. Japan will make every possible effort to ensure that the Bali Road Map produces the most effective framework by the time of the fifteenth Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, in Copenhagen.

At the recent World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, Prime Minister Fukuda presented a proposal called the "Cool Earth Promotion Programme". He expressed his firm determination that Japan will, along with other major emitters, set a quantified national target for greenhouse gas emissions reductions. In order to realize a drastic reduction in such gases worldwide, it is imperative that there be equity in the shouldering of that obligation. Prime Minister Fukuda also announced that Japan will take action in the area of international environmental cooperation by engaging in technology transfer and establishing a financial mechanism.

Japan has succeeded in its pursuit of economic growth and environmental protection by striving to conserve energy. It is willing to share that experience by transferring high-quality environmental technology to other countries. For example, if the level of efficiency in Japan's power plants is achieved in the United States, India and China, the resulting carbon dioxide emissions reductions would amount to 1.3 billion tons, which is the equivalent of Japan's annual total emissions. In that context, Japan proposes to set a global target of 30 per cent improvement of energy efficiency by 2020.

Japan has launched the Cool Earth Partnership to provide assistance amounting to $10 billion over five years to developing countries that are making efforts to reduce emissions and struggling against the severe adverse impact of climate change. Assistance will be provided in the area of mitigation, adaptation and access to clean energy. Special attention will be paid to small island developing countries and least developed countries, which are exposed to such dangers as the submersion of land and desertification as a result of emissions from other countries. Japan also aims to create a new multilateral fund, together with the United States and the United Kingdom, and we invite other donors to participate.

The importance of innovation, such as the development of new technologies and the creation of low-carbon societies, must also be stressed. Technological breakthroughs are critical if greenhouse gas emissions are to be cut in half by 2050. Japan is accelerating the development of technology, such as zero-carbon dioxide emission coal-fired power plants; low-cost, high-efficiency solar power generation technology; and green information technology. Japan will be emphasizing investment in research and development in the fields of the environment and energy, and over the next five years will be investing approximately $30 billion in that effort. We propose to formulate an international framework to accelerate technology development and share the fruits of such efforts.

In order to address climate change, it is essential to raise awareness of eco-lifestyles and mobilize all available resources, not only from the public but also from the private sector. The United Nations Global Compact can be most useful. The private sector has the most important role to play in the development, deployment and transfer of technology. In the effort to achieve a low-carbon society, private investment must be promoted. Japan expects the United Nations system to play an active part in the orchestration of such global efforts, and it appreciates the leadership that the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly have provided in generating the political momentum necessary to advance the international negotiation process.

The fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has made a substantial contribution to that progress by putting an end to the dispute concerning what causes climate change and clarifying in a scientific manner the serious impact climate change is having. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should play the pivotal role in the negotiation, with support from other United Nations agencies, as reported by the Secretary-General. It is important to promote coherence and coordination among United Nations agencies in order to address the issue in an effective and efficient manner without duplication.

As the 2009 deadline for the negotiations approaches, international debate is likely to intensify. Japan, as President of the G8 this year, will strive to make positive contributions to the negotiation process.

At the same time, as we look to the future, we must recognize that there are things that we can do right now and get to work on them. Most importantly, we should promote eco-lifestyles, known in Japanese as *mottainai* — meaning "not wasteful" — lifestyles. For example, recycling should be encouraged, and our homes and offices maintained in an energy-efficient manner. Japan calls on all actors to bring to bear the wisdom of humankind on that problem so that we may

create a low-carbon society and win the battle against climate change.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Sir John Sawers, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): We have been talking this week about how the United Nations can turn awareness of climate change into a coherent programme to support the Bali Action Plan. I take from the debate so far six main conclusions.

My first conclusion is that we are united in our sense of urgency to tackle climate change through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as the multilateral framework for agreeing a post-2012 climate deal. Whatever discussions happen outside that framework, they should support the central effort of the UNFCCC.

My second conclusion is that climate change threatens most of the United Nations objectives. It is a threat to peace and security, and above all to prosperity and development. As Kemal Dervis said, unless we address climate change and poverty reduction together, we will not achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Sustainable development must be sustainable, but high carbon growth or development strategies that do not take account of an already changing climate are not sustainable and will fail.

My third conclusion is that the United Nations is already doing a lot of good work on climate change. United Nations agencies provide unbiased scientific evidence, monitoring and early warning. They build the capacities of developing countries. They support the development of coherent national plans. They harness the innovative capacity of partnerships and, of course, the UNFCCC secretariat supports the legitimate universal forum for negotiations.

My fourth conclusion is that the United Nations alone does not hold the solution. United Nations agencies need to identify where they fit within a broader international system. That includes the international financial institutions, the private sector, research institutions, the UNFCCC and many other organizations. The United Kingdom believes that the new money needed to help developing countries acquire clean energy and adapt to a changing climate should flow mainly through the development banks and the private sector, but United Nations agencies should have a substantive role in ensuring that funding is used effectively, and do that by concentrating on building capacity in developing country Governments. Working together, the United Nations and the international financial institutions can deliver a coherent package of support.

My fifth conclusion is that agencies are already working in collaboration, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme on poverty and environment; the World Tourism Organization, UNESCO and UNEP on greening tourism; and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and UNEP on energy efficiency. However, such collaboration is the exception and not the norm. There are also many examples of duplication — for example, in the areas of capacity-building, early warning and assessment.

My sixth conclusion is that to maximize the United Nations contribution we need a strategic vision of how the different parts of the United Nations can best contribute to the Bali Action Plan. Information-sharing is not enough. We need real coordination that identifies comparative advantages and sets out a clear division of labour.

It was refreshing on Monday to hear views from within the United Nations system. As Achim Steiner outlined, there is still too much fragmentation, driven by lack of clarity on the roles and responsibilities of different agencies. And Mats Karlsson pointed out how senior leadership within the United Nations is needed to make the whole more than the sum of its parts.

Fragmentation is the greatest barrier to the United Nations maximizing its impact. The Secretary-General's report of 10 January (A/62/644) illustrates the enormous potential the United Nations has to help tackle climate change. But the lack of a shared strategic vision to realize that potential is striking. We look to the Secretary-General to lead the work needed to deliver this strategic vision. And we look to each agency to honestly assess its strengths and weaknesses, and to focus on how it can best serve the United Nations system and the membership as a whole.

Member States too have responsibilities. We must send clear and consistent messages, particularly through the various governing bodies, on where we think different agencies' comparative advantages lie. And those of us that provide voluntary funding must

use it to support coherence, rather than exacerbate fragmentation.

So where do we go from here? The Secretary-General's report suggests some ideas, but these need elaboration. There is promise in the idea of sectoral approaches, with lead United Nations agencies working to an overall strategy under the supervision of the Chief Executives Board (CEB). We think that most of this work can be done under existing mandates. We agree with the Group of 77 that this can be done without prejudice to intergovernmental discussions on system-wide coherence and international environmental governance.

In taking forward the CEB's work, I would suggest the following activities. First, analysis should be done of what the United Nations is already doing to support the implementation of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and on each of the Bali commitments. This should give a good idea of where the strengths, weaknesses, overlaps and gaps are.

Secondly, we should identify the comparative advantage of each United Nations body, based on their existing mandates, skills base, global profile and potential, taking full account of the roles of the rest of the international system.

Thirdly, based on that, we should develop a coherent United Nations climate engagement strategy under the leadership of the Secretary-General that responds to the Bali Action Plan. This approach should provide both an overall strategic vision and some detailed principles for coordinated working.

Fourthly, once we have this, agencies should work up their own strategies in the light of this wider climate engagement strategy, taking a fresh look at what they are doing now. Consultation with their governing bodies may be needed. But areas of duplication should be ironed out, and work should be intensified where an agency has a comparative advantage and priority needs are unmet.

This work will take time, and some interests will lose out along the way. But it is of the utmost urgency and priority if the United Nations is to be relevant to this biggest of global challenges. The United Kingdom stands ready to help in whatever way we can. I have no doubt that the General Assembly will continue to play a role overseeing this work. But we should not hold it up.

I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this timely debate.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea, His Excellency Mr. Cho Hyun.

Mr. Cho Hyun (Republic of Korea): I would first like to express my appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for organizing this thematic debate.

I believe that 2007 was a year marked by increased political momentum in addressing the daunting challenge of climate change. The United Nations high-level event on climate change brought the subject to the attention of the international community at the highest level. That contributed decisively to the adoption of the Bali Road Map at the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in December. We recognize Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's constructive role in the establishment of the Bali Road Map.

The Korean Government appreciates the fact that the Bali Road Map laid the foundation for a global partnership to establish a post-2012 framework that can efficiently and effectively address the problem. We also welcome the launch of the comprehensive post-2012 negotiations, where both developed and developing countries will participate in the light of each country's economic and social circumstances. We hope that the international community will reach a successful conclusion to these negotiations within the allotted time.

We believe that the United Nations should play a pivotal role in seeking solutions to the challenges of climate change. We also believe that the implementation of the Bali Action Plan is important. Establishing strong partnerships among stakeholders, including central and local governments as well as industrial and civil society, is also crucial. In addition, we believe that partnerships between developed and developing countries will encourage the meaningful participation of developing countries in addressing climate change through adaptation, mitigation, technology transfer and financing. We expect that the United Nations, particularly the UNFCCC, will continue to play a creative role in developing common ground for a post-2012 framework in the course of the 2008-2009 negotiations.

Therefore, we believe that each United Nations agency should first and foremost place climate change at the top of its agenda and promote the mainstreaming of so-called green activities. It is also imperative that United Nations agencies coordinate among themselves regarding such climate change activities in order to achieve the most effective results.

In this light, the Korean Government supports the efforts of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). We expect that the CEB will continue to find a productive way to coordinate United Nations entities in this field; the efforts of United Nations agencies, funds, and programmes will thereby demonstrate effectiveness and efficiency by avoiding duplication and fragmentation.

Alongside these United Nations efforts, we believe that each country must also coordinate efforts by its ministries and departments. Such efforts by national ministries and departments should correspond to and be coordinated with those of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in order to aim for the best possible results.

For our part, the Korean Government launched its fourth national action plan on climate change last December. Its main agenda included strengthening the capacity-building skills of local governments, industries and civil society in confronting climate change.

Korea will also continue to engage in the international process to address climate change, including supporting the UNFCCC and other initiatives. We are ready to contribute constructively to these efforts and to integrate an environmental perspective into our official development assistance policies and projects. In addition, in planning for Expo 2012 in Yeosu, my Government intends to encourage international efforts for sustainable development that take into account protecting marine and coastal ecosystems against climate change.

In conclusion, the Republic of Korea will continue to commit itself to engaging in collective international efforts against climate change.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Mr. Robert Guba Aisi, Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea.

Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea): Through you, Sir, let me congratulate the President on organizing this thematic debate. I also take this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General for his committed leadership in our efforts to address climate change. We also align ourselves with the statements delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Alliance of Small Island States, and the Pacific small islands developing States by the ambassadors of Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada and Tonga respectively.

For Papua New Guinea and, I suspect, many other countries, the time for mind-numbing debate has passed. The time for leadership is here. We cannot idly watch our island communities slip silently under the waves of sea-level rise, our villages torn apart by cyclones of increasing fury or our children die of new virulent diseases. We are prepared to step forward and accept the challenge to lead by example.

In order to meet that challenge, Papua New Guinea is working to integrate climate change into the principles of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) — especially MDG 7 on environmental sustainability, to be underpinned by MDG 8, which refers to the need to develop global partnerships.

Towards that objective, our Prime Minister has recently established the Office of Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability. The objective is to integrate all the wide-ranging interconnections related to climate change: desertification, sea-level rise, air pollution, biodiversity loss, spreading diseases, erratic weather and so on — and to coordinate the best international and national minds through partnerships to focus Papua New Guinea on contributing towards solutions while battling the unfortunate consequences of climate change.

We know that this is a very complex undertaking for a developing country, but we seek to lead by example — but again, in partnership with other friends, including the United Nations and its agencies, to undertake that challenging endeavour. We challenge the United Nations system to deliver as one in that critical endeavour.

As we reflect on the climate change Conference that took place last December in Bali, we do so with a mixed sense of hope and foreboding. While, on the one hand, we are encouraged that there is now a timetable with a start, a finish and an agenda for action, on the other, we are deeply concerned that the entire Bali Action Plan almost collapsed while only really being an agreement to continue talking.

However, looking forward, the next two years will become increasingly complex as we struggle to define common but differentiated responsibilities and the steps that all nations must take to deal with climate change, either through mitigation or adaptation.

If we are to succeed, we must acknowledge that the primary responsibility for global warming and its consequences today falls mainly upon industrialized nations, including the resulting mitigation and adaptation challenges all of humanity must now face. We are very concerned by the hubris of certain industrialized nations that promote emissions reductions in certain developing countries as a precondition for taking responsibility for carbon emissions at home. We seek leadership by example. We say: "Please show us how deeply emissions can be cut in all industrialized countries, rather than simply pointing fingers at the poor in developing countries".

We do not accept that the cost of action is too high for those industrialized nations. Rather, the cost of inaction places an unfair burden on developing countries and the world's poor. Therefore, all industrialized nations must demonstrate leadership by reducing carbon emissions within their own borders through deep and hard targets. That concept has to be the bedrock for any future international agreements on climate change.

Thoughtfully constructed and deeper cuts within industrialized nations can be leveraged to mobilize sufficient and sustainable resources necessary to underwrite emissions reductions in developing countries along with efforts towards adaptation. Specifically, we believe that international carbon emissions markets hold the greatest promise to provide the necessary scale and sustainability of revenues. By expanding and strengthening carbon emissions markets, we may leverage deeper emissions cuts by industrialized nations to finance the necessary systems of positive incentives and adaptation for developing countries. To be successful, we must integrate more industrialized countries, more sectors and deeper emissions reduction targets, but carbon emissions markets need not carry the burden alone. We must also consider selected carbon consumption taxes, reducing energy subsidies, and new and additional official development assistance.

When it comes to mitigation, Papua New Guinea is seeking to contribute in an equitable way. As such, along with many other developing countries, we have been advocating a new initiative to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. We ask: Why should the world care about deforestation and forest degradation? The simple answer is this: If we lose the world's forests, we lose the fight against climate change. Rainforests are the Earth's greatest utility — our planet's lungs, thermostat and air-conditioning system.

Tropical rainforests are being cut down because the world is not paying for those services, so the communities that depend on forests must make their living in other ways. To compound that dire situation, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, emissions from deforestation could account for approximately 20 per cent of global emissions, but action to reduce emissions from deforestation is too important to wait until 2012. Therefore, we must overcome the existing perverse incentive systems, credit early action starting today, and expand implementation in future climate frameworks. We say that if deforestation causes 20 per cent of global emissions, then we must allocate 20 per cent of available resources to address that important source. We must make this happen. For the world's climate, the world's forests and our rural poor, that day cannot come soon enough.

Even with significant emissions reductions over the coming decades, certain impacts of climate change are unavoidable. We are duty-bound to be prepared. While developing countries are not responsible for climate change, its effects will fall most heavily on those least able to adapt. The current mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to fund adaptation within developing countries is frankly, in our view, unethical. How can we justify taxing developing countries through a 2 per cent levy on Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) trades only for adaptation costs that are no fault of their own? In any enlightened society, those primarily responsible for damage must pay for corrective action.

Therefore, adaptation taxes should be levied against the carbon trading of annex B countries and not deducted from the fractional revenues derived by developing countries from the CDM. The present structure is untenable and unconscionable. Therefore, Papua New Guinea will present a new agenda item at the next Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC

seeking corrective action on that matter. We seek the General Assembly's support.

To conclude, we will not defeat climate change simply by asking developing countries to slow or halt economic growth. There is no political will to stand still, nor should there be. However, as a developing country, we are willing to contribute equitably towards a common objective. We are willing to do our part and lead by example.

The Acting President: I give the floor to Mr. Andreas Mavroyiannis, Permanent Representative of Cyprus.

Mr. Mavroyiannis (Cyprus): Cyprus has fully aligned itself with the statement made yesterday by the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union. I will therefore limit my remarks to those of specific national significance.

Situated in one of the most precarious geographical regions that are expected to be gravely affected both by rising temperatures and rising sea levels, with all the consequences that those entail, my country has already been experiencing the effects of climate change for some time. We are cognizant, as I am certain others in this Hall are as well, of the impact that it can have on the everyday lives of people, affecting their health and general well-being and forcing them to adjust their way of life to prevalent climatic phenomena.

The consequences of our vulnerability — the extent to which the economy will be harmed, the magnitude of a possible natural disaster and its human and material damage, and the impact on human life and activity and on our ecosystems in general — are by no means easy to predict. Climate change also constitutes a threat not only to development, but also to global peace and security. Scarcity of resources, including water, food and fertile land, can be a contributing or even an instigating factor in fuelling conflict or accentuating such phenomena as famine, disease, migration, regional instability, social and political unrest, rejection of the other, and an even more unequal distribution of wealth.

Also, at this stage, any prediction as to the extent to which existing damage can be reversed and how we can best — and to what extent — adapt in order to avoid becoming hostages to climatic conditions is pure conjecture. Our collective thinking on this issue must at the very least lead to a widespread realization that we share the same environment and that damage sustained by it anywhere in the world has a global impact.

We can observe that vulnerable States, in particular small island developing States, that have contributed very little to environmental damage are impacted the most and have the fewest means of defence. Many countries, usually small, poor or vulnerable ones, require support in adaptation and mitigation strategies and should be given qualified priority in the area of new technologies and financing.

We are not here to assess the existence or the magnitude of the threat posed by human activity-induced climate change. This has been verified by scientific and empirical data, including those of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The high-level event of this past September and the Bali Conference generated a wide and clear commitment to concerted and integrated action to tackle climate change and to do so within the appropriate multilateral framework for action, which is the United Nations.

Thus, we consider that meetings like these serve to focus this commitment, making it more concrete rather than merely reaffirming it. Our collective thinking to formulate concrete measures on the basis of scientific recommendations must start without delay. This applies to the establishment of a post-2012 climate regime, but also to action that can be taken in the meantime.

In this respect, we welcome the report of the Secretary-General, "Overview of United Nations activities in relation to climate change" (A/62/644), and, in particular, the Secretary-General's recommendations on the way forward. We also welcome the document prepared by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination defining key areas of action and an effective coordinated structure for the United Nations system, along with the contribution that the system can make in supporting global, regional and national action within the four key areas of mitigation, adaptation, technology and financing. But we must move from generic discussions to action and to focused and measurable progress.

Cyprus, as a member of the European Union (EU), participates in the policies and decisions of the Union on this crucial issue and is ready to fully play its role both within the EU and on the international front.

A global challenge of this scale should give rise to a sustained and multidimensional effort encompassing short-, medium- and long-term goals. The Bali Road Map, which leads towards achieving a new global climate agreement in Copenhagen, is a significant step. But it is yet one among many that will be required in the efforts of the international community to ensure that current and future generations can live in a safer and more prosperous world.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.